

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

18 June 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Morning Meeting of 18 June 1969

**The Director opened the meeting by noting that the Director of Security was present in order to expedite the handling of a Presidential request. He pointed to the item by Peter Grose in today's New York Times entitled "U. S. Intelligence Doubts Soviet First-Strike Goal" and asked each member of the Executive Committee to survey his subordinates with respect to their knowledge of the Memorandum to Holders of NIE 11-8-68 and to provide a signed statement as to whether they had disclosed to any member of the press the contents of the Memorandum to Holders. The Director added that he wants from the USIB Executive Secretary a memorandum detailing the distribution of this Memorandum to Holders. After some discussion it was decided that the memoranda of certification should contain the statement that the individuals concerned had not disclosed the substance of the Memorandum to Holders "to any newspaper man or unauthorized person."

Godfrey reported that the Soviet joint exercise in the Far East is over.

Godfrey noted that the previously reported June surge in Communist activity in Vietnam is on.

D/ONE noted that the meeting of ONE consultants is going well.

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Carver again noted that work is under way to satisfy Dr. Kissinger's request for a memorandum on how best to enhance intelligence collection capabilities pertaining to the Cambodian logistical system.

Maury reported that he finally got in touch with Ken BeLieu on the Ervin bill. He noted that Mr. BeLieu thinks we should go ahead with plans to contact Senators Byrd, Hruska, and Thurmond.

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET

SENSITIVE

Executive Director noted that a letter has been drafted for the Director's signature to the Secretary of Defense on the difficulties we are having in phasing out [] program. He noted that we may have some difficulty in faithfully meeting the 1 July deadline. Since the draft letter invokes the names of Senator Russell and Congressman Mahon, the Executive Director noted that he will ask Maury to show the letter in draft to Messrs. Woodruff and Michaels before submitting it to the Director for signature. The Director concurred.

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[] for Goodwin reported that Peter Grose called him last night asking for information pertaining to NIE/NIPP scheduling.

[] noted that he referred Mr. Grose to an earlier piece on this subject by John Finney and commented that Grose did not reveal that he would be publishing in today's New York Times (see first item). The Director asked [] to prepare a memorandum on his conversation with Mr. Grose.

The Director noted Secretary Laird's comment to him that the DOD "white paper" was coordinated or shown to some element of CIA. The Director asked the EA/DCI to contact Frank Hand to determine whether the coordination referred to by the Secretary took place in his quarter. The DD/I commented that their first knowledge of the "white paper" was mention of it in the press but that he will check appropriate DD/I elements. DD/S&T observed that the Strategic Intelligence Panel is scheduled to meet next week and questioned whether it would be appropriate for them to get together in view of possible misunderstandings. The Director concurred in the DD/S&T's judgment that the meeting should be canceled.

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The DD/S&T commented that the agenda for the next NRO meeting is extremely confused and that he is having lunch today with Dr. McLucas to seek some revision or clarification of the agenda.

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L. K. White

**On 10 July the Director noted he has satisfied himself that no Agency person was derelict with respect to the above item and that he will render an appropriate report to the President.

TOP SECRET

SENSITIVE

U.S. Intelligence Doubts Soviet First-Strike Goal

By PETER GROSE

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 17 — The United States intelligence community has reportedly concluded that the Soviet Union is not now striving for the capability to launch a first-strike nuclear attack against this country but is probably seeking more than parity with the United States in missile strength.

At meetings last week of the United States Intelligence Board, which is presided over by the Director of Central Intelligence, Richard Helms, and various civilian and service intelligence agencies are understood to have reached a consensus estimate of Soviet strategic strength for the next two or three years.

Sent to the White House as the official judgment of the intelligence community, the detailed and secret survey seems

bound to become embroiled in the current controversy over the opening of strategic arms talks with the Russians and the proposed deployment of an antiballistic-missile system.

The White House announced today that the National Security Council would meet tomorrow on arms policies. President Nixon is expected to disclose at a televised news conference at 7 o'clock Thursday night when and where the Administration proposes to open the new round of disarmament talks.

Meanwhile, in a related development, 39 Senators—only 12 short of a majority—joined together as co-sponsors of a resolution urging the President to seek agreement with the Soviet Union to halt testing of

Continued on Page 10, Column 1

U.S. BOARD ASSAYS SOVIET INTENTION

Continued From Page 1, Col. 3

multiple-warhead missiles.

The signers included the Senate Democratic leader, Mike Mansfield of Montana, and the Democratic whip, Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts. Senator Edward W. Brooke, Republican of Massachusetts, was the chief author of the resolution, which was endorsed by a total of 27 Democrats and 12 Republicans.

Critics of the Administration are fearful that Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird and Pentagon strategists have drowned out Secretary of State William P. Rogers and other potential restraining voices — including the Central Intelligence Agency — in pushing for a stern negotiation position and for costly defense programs by, in the critics' view, exaggerating Soviet nuclear capabilities.

Among Congressional opponents of the Sageguard anti-ballistic missile system, there is particular resentment at what they see as the Pentagon's highly selective, if not actually distorted, use of raw intelligence data to promote the pro-ABM position. The same resentment has been voiced privately by intelligence officials themselves.

It is in this context that the high-level consensus estimate of the entire intelligence community assumes special significance.

The United States Intelligence Board is a high-level coordinating group that meets weekly to correlate all the data available across the Government. Sitting on the board under Mr. Helms's chairmanship are representatives of the C.I.A.; the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency; the intelligence branches of the Army, Navy and Air Force; the State Department, the Atomic Energy Commission and the National Security Agency.

These agencies agreed last week that the Russians appear to be moving rapidly, more so than expected several years ago, to strengthen their nuclear forces as a deterrent and are probably striving for more than equality of missile strength with the United States.

Desire and Intention

But, in the board's judgment, this drive falls short of an effort to achieve a "first-strike capability"—the capability to destroy enough United States missiles in a first strike to prevent this country from launching an effective retaliatory blow.

The "desire" ultimately to acquire such a capability may be present in some Soviet policy-making circles, the board concluded, but both the capability and the specific intention to achieve it were ruled out for the foreseeable future.

This conclusion was reportedly stated in the formal "national intelligence estimate" without any dissenting footnotes from any of the participating agencies.

Pentagon strategists have repeatedly cited the threat of a Soviet first-strike capability to justify the need for the Sageguard ABM System.

Not a Direct Contradiction

The intelligence community's estimate minimized this threat, though it is not in direct contradiction with the official Pentagon view. Mr. Laird's statements raised the possibility of a Soviet first-strike capability by the mid-1970's, a time beyond the two or three years covered in the intelligence community's estimate.

Preliminary assessments prepared by the C.I.A. and made available to Congressional committees were understood to

have come down far harder in rebutting Mr. Laird's arguments about Soviet capabilities.

According to reliable sources, Mr. Helms, aware of the political controversy surrounding the estimates, softened some of the language of the final survey—without altering the basic conclusions—to avert an unnecessary confrontation between the C.I.A. and the Pentagon.

The bureaucratic ordeal of achieving a consensus position among various Government agencies has stirred Congressional interest in the reliability of top-level intelligence and the means by which raw data are analyzed.

In policy controversies, particularly on strategic arms questions, individual agencies' tentative or preliminary assessments are portrayed as the latest authoritative intelligence as they are passed around among participants in the debate.

The purpose of the United States Intelligence Board is to provide a high-level forum for the entire intelligence community to meet and try to achieve a nonpartisan consensus for the President.

Mr. Helms acts as the spokesman for the community and the C.I.A. in policy-making councils. Pentagon and State Department intelligence assessments can also be called to the President's attention independently by Mr. Laird, by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, and by Mr. Rogers.

Hill Intelligence Report Disputes Administration on Red ABM Peril

By David Kraslow
Los Angeles Times

An unpublished Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff document reveals a basic disagreement within the Government over whether the Soviet Union is going for a firststrike nuclear attack capability in its missile program. This question is central to the issue of whether the United States should build an anti-ballistic missile system.

The document discloses that the United States Intelligence Board comprised of the top national security agencies, has never made a finding that the Soviet SS-9 intercontinental ballistic missile was deployed in order to develop a first-strike capability.

In Senate testimony on March 21, Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird said that the Soviets "are going for a first strike capability. They're going for our missiles and there's no doubt about that."

In addition to the statement on the intelligence board's assessment, the staff document makes other "assertions" concerning the Soviet missile program and related matters.

A copy of the document, based for the most part on information given the committee by Central Intelligence Agency Director Richard Helms on Soviet missile de-

ployment and capabilities, has been obtained by The Times. Helms is chairman of the intelligence board as well.

The committee decided at a closed meeting yesterday against releasing the document. It voted instead to invite Laird to come before the committee to try to explain the differences between what Laird and other officials have been saying.

The document obviously was intended as a counter to the paign to win support for its Safeguard ABM plan in the Senate, where the division on the issue is close. A bi-partisan majority of the 15-man Foreign Relations Committee is believed to be strongly opposed to deployment of an ABM system.

The document suggests distortion of secret intelligence data by unnamed Administration officials to gain public support for Safeguard.

"The intelligence information received by the committee does not accord in many important respects with the intelligence cited by certain officials of the Executive Branch and referred to in certain press reports," the document says.

"Because of the important part intelligence information has come to play in the debate on the proposed deployment of

the Safeguard ABM system, and because the committee believes that the intelligence information made public has often been erroneous and thus has inadvertently created false impressions both within the Government and among the public generally, the committee believes it has a responsibility to attempt to clarify certain questions of fact."

In a "fact sheet" issued on March 14 to help demonstrate the need for Safeguard, the Pentagon said that "the Soviet ICBM program has not leveled off as we had hoped. In fact, if anything, it has accelerated, and they are continuing to deploy their big missiles."

The statement might leave the impression that Soviet missile deployment has increased. Yet the staff document says:

(1)—We have known about tests of the SS-9, and about deployment of the SS-9, for five years.

(2) In the past two years the rate of deployment of these missiles has decreased and not increased.

(3) The number of SS-9 launchers discovered since November, 1968, represents an increase of less than 3 per cent of the total number of SS-9 launchers which we know to be deployed.